

**Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC) Meeting Minutes Excerpt**  
**“Harvard Symposium Team”**  
**(page 4-5, ELAC minutes- October 8, 2008)**

**Statewide Early Learning Plan - Amie Lapp Payne**

Amie began with a recap of one of the statutory requirements of ELAC which is to work in conjunction with the Department to develop a statewide early learning plan that crosses systems and sectors to promote alignment of private and public sector actions, objectives, and resources, and to ensure school readiness. She added that one of DEL’s four goals in the strategic plan is to Build a Comprehensive Early Learning System, however there is a need for a comprehensive plan in which we, as a state (across all systems and sectors) identify, define, and track progress against a set of agreed upon performance measures, or indicators for children and families, and for the systems that support them.

Amie also reported that she and Director Bosworth were participants on the Washington State team that attended the National Symposium on Early Childhood Science and Policy at Harvard University’s Center on the Developing Child. The “Harvard Team” also included representatives from the Governor’s office, both political parties, the Senate (Kauffman, King), the House (Kagi, Haler), and the private sector (Watt, Graciela); and Valisa Smith, of the Gates Foundation participated in the Symposium as well.

One of the goals the team worked on was what the “next steps” would look like after the symposium in terms of the scientifically-based actions needed to move closer to meeting the primary goal for children: *that all children are healthy and ready for success in school and in life.*

Based upon the presentations at the symposium and during the group discussions in Boston and follow-up discussions in Seattle and Olympia, the group recognized that a multi-disciplinary approach looking at not only early learning but also health, child welfare, child safety and economic security was crucial. This mirrors the national model of an early learning system that Director Bosworth presented to ELAC in January of this year, and by identifying specific indicators associated with each of these four categories (Early Care and Education; Parent Information and Support ; Health, Mental Health, and Nutrition, and Special Needs and Intervention) we can join the ranks of nearly every state in the nation and what they have done to make progress in early learning (excluding Minnesota; Boston, MA; MI).

Amie pointed out that there are a number of excellent indicators already available, but they are not collected in one easily accessible location nor are they specific to the birth-to-five population. She asked the council to make a decision about whether to support what the team and others have agreed to.

What was proposed is two-fold:

(1) Early Learning Plan Committee, for which we have a Council Representative, in addition to representatives from stakeholder groups.

(2) To move forward; make measurable, planned progress on the development of a statewide early learning plan in conjunction with DEL and with stakeholders we, as a first step, host an “Indicators Forum” to include:

- Establish indicators platform for statewide plan
- Define indicators
- Link to existing strategic plans (and logical models, etc) in communities throughout the state
- Map out how suggested strategies roll up in the four model areas in the statewide ELP
- Include analysis of current plans
- Roll up all into single, cohesive plan; get ELAC and public feedback, buy in
- Approve, submit to legislature

Director Bosworth opened a discussion for the proposed Early Learning Plan Committee and the Indicators Forum:

- Ilene expressed her excitement for how far things have come but cautioned that things will become stalled if they try to make selections based on perfection.
- Linda looks forward to seeking specific outcomes adding that people will respond better to measureable outcomes and a common language.
- Maria Vera said they need to deliver the message to local communities and asked how members can support that effort.
- Robin Arnold-Williams said some measurements get measured in other venues such as the Governor’s GMAP and it’s not just ELAC’s responsibility.
- Sue Winn said we need better information sharing.
- Lorena noted a disconnect with children in populations not currently in the system.

Director Bosworth requested establishment of a group of volunteers from ELAC for 1 to 2 meetings 2 hours each between now and the December 30, ELAC meeting to include other stakeholders as well. The work plan will be presented at the next ELAC meeting.

Lorena Lowell and Jada Rupley volunteered for the Statewide Early Learning Workgroup. Maria Vera offered to participate by phone.

MOTION: Lorena Lowell motioned to create the Statewide Early Learning Group and nominated Lorena Lowell and Jada Rupley as ELAC liaisons. SECOND: Director Jone Bosworth seconded. ACTION: Motion passed unanimously.